Invitation to Submit Restoration Project Ideas

The Tar Creek Trustee Council (TCTC) invites the public to submit restoration project ideas that have the potential to restore natural resources and associated services that have been injured (or harmed) due to the release of hazardous substances (lead, cadmium, zinc, and other metals) in the northeastern Oklahoma portion of the Tri-State Mining District (TSMD). The TSMD is a former lead and zinc mining district in southeast Kansas, southwest Missouri, and northeastern Oklahoma. It contains multiple Superfund Sites, including the Tar Creek Superfund Site. This invitation to submit restoration project ideas is focused on the northeastern Oklahoma portion of the TSMD, which contains the Tar Creek Superfund Site [*see the frequently asked questions section for more background information on the TCTC and this invitation to submit restoration project ideas*].

The Tar Creek Trustee Council is seeking "shovel-ready" restoration project ideas in northeastern Oklahoma, with the following restoration focus, and overarching and specific goals:

Restoration Focus:

- Restoration in northeastern Oklahoma that can be initiated in the next 2 years with the expectation of full implementation within 3 years after initiation
- Focus is on project ideas that restore injured (harmed) resources, habitats, and/or associated services

Overarching Goals:

- Restore habitat and services closely linked to the injury, in location and type
- Incorporate cultural knowledge transfer, to restore Tribal services that require specific action to be re-established
- Select projects in a complementary and coordinated manner that provides synergies across projects

Specific Goals:

- Reinstate healthy, native terrestrial (e.g., prairie and riparian) habitat, resources, and services that were injured as a result of the released hazardous substances
- Restore aquatic instream habitat, resources, and services that were injured as a result of the released hazardous substances
- Restore Tribal/cultural services and connections to injured resources and habitat

Background Information

The TCTC is engaged in a Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) process for the northeastern Oklahoma portion of the TSMD. The Northeastern Oklahoma Mining NRDAR (NOMNRDAR) Site is shown on the map below. The goal of the NRDAR process is to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of natural resources, and the associated resource service losses, that have been injured as a result of exposure to hazardous substances.

Although the injury assessment is ongoing, the Trustees have decided to initiate restoration now. This is because the Trustees have recovered restoration funds from potentially responsible parties, and believe that the injury assessment completed to date has sufficiently demonstrated the types of injury and service losses to enable the identification of appropriate types of restoration actions (see the "Eligible Restoration Categories" section below for a description of injuries and service losses to be restored). The sooner restoration can begin, the sooner the benefits to natural resources and the public can be realized. Recognizing that remedial activities are also ongoing at the Site, the Trustees intend to carefully coordinate restoration actions with cleanup activities.

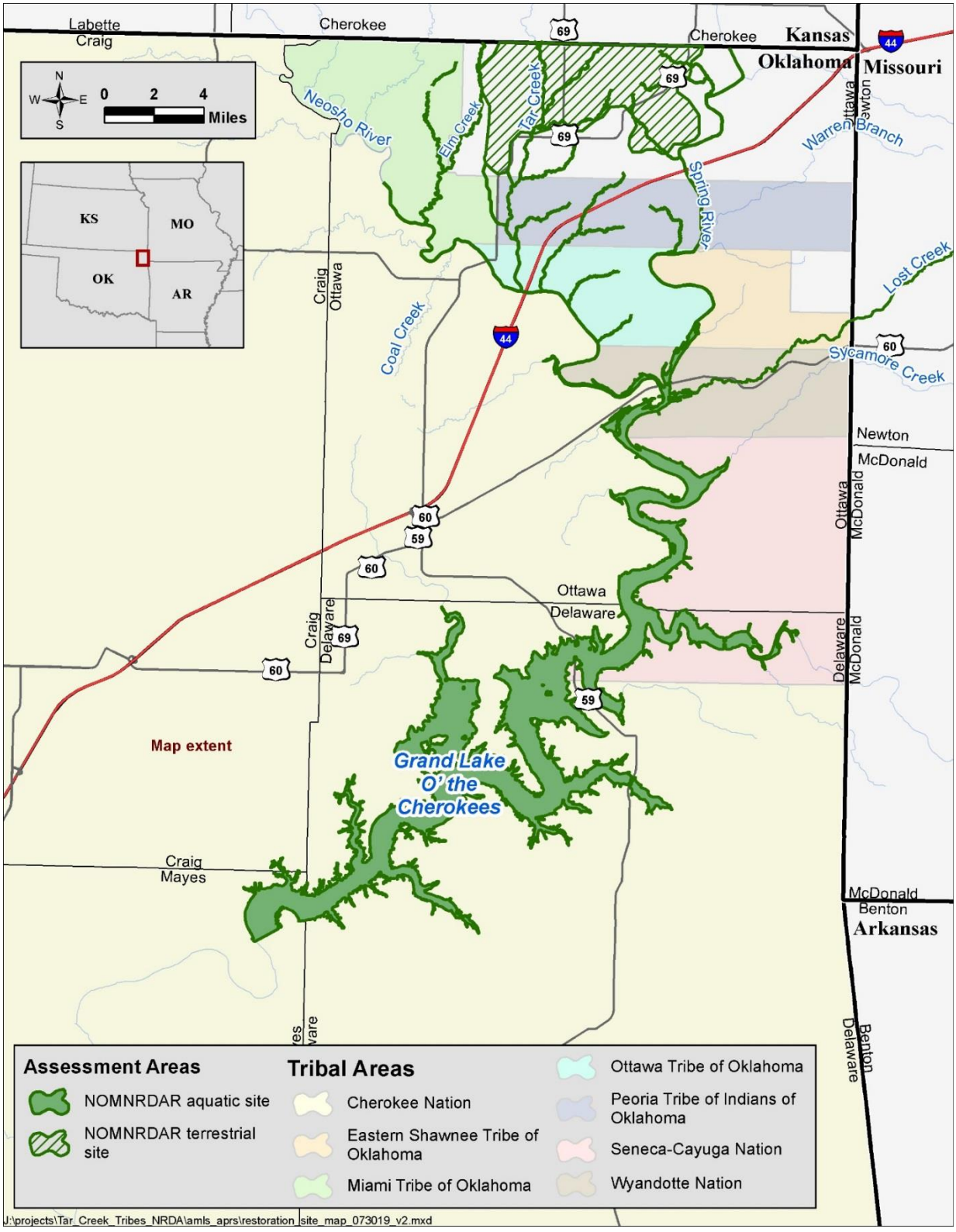
In 2017, the Trustees prepared a Programmatic Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment (Programmatic RP/EA) to provide a framework for restoration (see https://www.cerc.usgs.gov/orda_docs/DocHandler.ashx?task=get&ID=2976). The Programmatic RP/EA identifies and evaluates restoration alternatives, and describes the preferred restoration alternative that the Trustees believe is the best option to restore injured natural resources and services at the NOMNRDAR Site. The preferred restoration alternative is comprised of (1) terrestrial, (2) aquatic, and (3) cultural restoration, which may occur at a combination of "on-site" and "off-site" locations.

On-site restoration is defined as restoration that is located within the NOMNRDAR Site boundary, including both terrestrial and aquatic areas where contamination has come to be located, or where natural resources or the services they provide may have been affected by the releases of these hazardous substances (the green solid and hatched areas in the map above).

Off-site restoration occurs outside of the NOMNRDAR Site boundary and could include areas in northeastern Oklahoma and areas within adjacent states that will restore, replace, rehabilitate, and/or acquire the equivalent of injured resources and services. Most projects will be in areas of Craig, Ottawa, Mayes, and Delaware counties in northeastern Oklahoma. Appropriate off-site projects could occur in other Oklahoma counties or portions of adjoining states that are in or near the TSMD, but restoration at those sites must provide unique or competitive opportunities to replace and/or rehabilitate resources or services that have been impacted at the NOMNRDAR Site.

This is the first request for restoration project ideas, and the Trustees have allocated up to $10 million to be spent on multiple restoration projects that they will determine are appropriate (see the "Restoration Selection Process" section below for more information on how the Trustees will evaluate project ideas). The Trustees may issue additional invitations to submit restoration project ideas to assist them with spending the remaining restoration funds. For this first invitation, the Trustees are seeking "shovel-ready" restoration project ideas located in northeastern Oklahoma that align with the focus and goals stated above, and that fall within at least one of the eligible restoration categories described below.

Map of Northeastern Oklahoma, containing the NOMNRDAR Site:



Eligible Restoration Categories

The Tar Creek Trustee Council is seeking restoration project ideas in northeastern Oklahoma that fall within at least one of following categories of restoration (or restoration types), and can to be initiated within the next two years:

Terrestrial

- Projects that restore:
  - Upland habitat (i.e., lands rarely saturated or covered by water) such as upland forests and prairies that support biota, including migratory birds
  - River corridor habitat (i.e., lands that are intermittently saturated or covered by water) such as riparian and floodplain habitats that support biota, including migratory birds
  - **Examples:**
  - Land aquisition
  - Deep tilling of soil ammendments in remediated areas with residual metals
  - Upland habitat (native prairie meadow, savanna, and forest) improvements through planting and other actions
  - Riparian and floodplain habitat restoration, preservation, and enhancement

Aquatic

- Projects that are located predominantly within a creek or stream channel (e.g., Lytle, Elm, and Tar creeks and tributaries; Neosho and Spring rivers and tributaries, Grand Lake) and may benefit fish, mussels, and other aquatic biota; also referred to as "in-stream" projects
- **Examples:**
  - Stream habitat improvements such as restoring geomorphology, and connection with the floodplain
  - Reintroduction of native species such as native fish and mussels

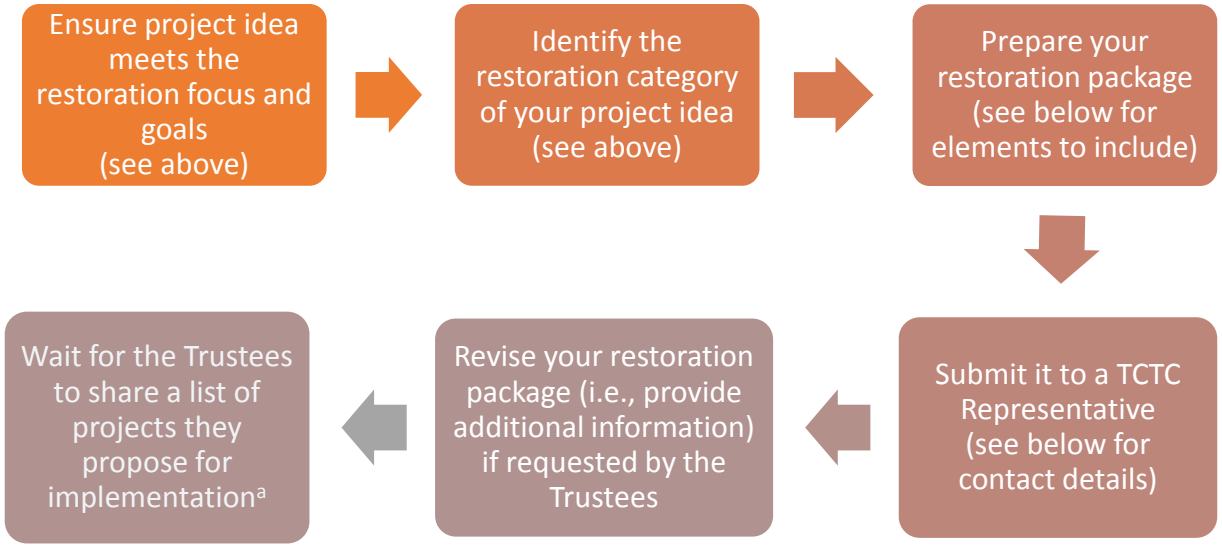
Cultural

- Projects that restore cultural services (or Tribal use) of natural resources and habitats
- **Examples:**
  - Enhancements to terrestrial and aquatic habitat restoration, such as including culturally significant plants and wildlife
  - Apprenticeship programs designed to restore cultural practices that use natural resources (e.g., gathering, hunting, ceremonies)
  - Protecting culturally important caves and springs
  - Stocking culturally important fish or mussels
  - Restoring/enhancing cultural gathering areas

Specifically for this invitation to submit restoration project ideas, the Trustees will consider (1) on-site terrestrial, (2) off-site terrestrial and aquatic, and (3) cultural restoration project ideas. **Due to the need to coordinate restoration implementation with remedial actions, which have not yet been initiated in on-site aquatic areas, the Trustees are not seeking on-site aquatic project ideas at this time. Further, during their evaluation, the Trustees will coordinate with the remedial authority on any proposed terrestrial project idea that would occur on the Tar Creek Superfund Site to ensure consistency with the remedy and remedial activities.**

Submittal Process

Please follow these steps to submit a restoration project idea package (or "restoration package"):



a. After reviewing the restoration project ideas, the Trustees will release a RP/EA(s) for public review and comment that describes the restoration projects the Trustees propose for implementation

What to Include in Your Restoration Project Idea Package

The restoration project idea package should be no more than 10 pages, and contain as much of the following information as possible:

Basic information

- Project title
- Point-of-contact (POC) information (name, email, phone number)
- Project location (including a map is helpful)
- Implementation timeline (should be initiated within two years of award and completed three years after initiation)

Description of the restoration project idea

- Indicate the restoration category (see above)
- Describe what natural resources/services will benefit from the restoration
- Highlight if there is potential to benefit more than one natural resource/service

Estimated costs

- Include all implementation costs (materials/equipment; personnel; land acquisition costs, if any; etc.)
- Performance monitoring costs
- Describe any matching funds or in-kind services

Where to Submit Your Restoration Project Idea Package

A restoration project idea package can be submitted via email to one of the Tar Creek Trustee Council Representatives:

State of Oklahoma:
Jay Wright, Environmental Programs Manager
Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
707 North Robinson
Oklahoma City, OK 73101
Telephone: (405) 702-1017
Email: jay.wright@deq.ok.gov

Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma:
Tabitha Langston, Environmental Specialist
Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma
PO Box 110
Miami, OK 74355
Telephone: (918) 541-1902
Email: tabitha.oto@gmail.com

U.S. Department of the Interior:
Suzanne Dunn, Senior Contaminants Specialist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
9014 E. 21st Street
Tulsa, OK 74129
Telephone: (918) 382-4521
Email: Suzanne_Dunn@fws.gov

Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma:
Larry Tippit, Peoria Environmental Department
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
PO Box 1527
Miami, OK 74355
Telephone: (918) 540-2535 ext. 17
Email: ltippit@peoriatribe.com

Cherokee Nation:
Nancy John, Environmental Director
Cherokee Nation
206 East Allen Road
Tahlequah, OK 74464
Telephone: (918) 453-5102
Email: Nancy-John@cherokee.org

Seneca-Cayuga Nation:
Stephen Wolfe, Environmental Director
Seneca-Cayuga Nation
PO Box 453220
Grove, OK 74345-3220
Telephone: (918) 791-6035
Email: swolfe@sctribe.com

Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma:
Kristi Laughlin, Environmental Director
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
10080 South Bluejacket Road
Wyandotte, OK 74370
Telephone: (918) 666-5151
Email: klaughlin@estoo.net

Wyandotte Nation:
Christen Lee, Environmental Director
Wyandotte Nation
64700 East Highway 60
Wyandotte, OK 74370
Telephone: (918) 678-6341
Email: clee@wyandotte-nation.org

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma:
Heather Webb, Environmental Programs Coordinator
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
PO Box 1326
Miami, OK 74355
Telephone: (918) 541-1373
Email: hwebb@miamination.com

When to Submit Restoration Project Ideas

Project ideas need to be received by a designated Tar Creek Trustee Council Representative by close of business January 6, 2020.

Restoration Selection Process

The TCTC will review each restoration project idea package to ensure that all information is included (see the "What to Include in Your Restoration Project Idea Package" section), and that the proposed restoration project idea aligns with the Trustees' focus and goals stated above. If additional information is needed to fully evaluate a submitted restoration project idea, the Trustees may request this information from the identified POC in the restoration project idea package. Project ideas will then be evaluated by the Trustees using three sets of Restoration Planning Criteria. These include **Basic Acceptability Criteria for Restoration Planning**, which are specified in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) NRDAR regulations [43 C.F.R. 11.82(d)] and will serve as an initial sreening tool. Additionally, the TCTC developed **Natural Resource and Services Criteria for Restoration Planning** and **Implementation Criteria for Restoration Planning**.

Basic Acceptability Criteria for Restoration Planning	Natural Resource and Services Criteria for Restoration Planning	Implementation Criteria for Restoration Planning
• Eligibility criteria; serve as an initial screening tool to identify restoration alternatives that qualify for Trustee consideration	• Used to evaluate the nexus to injury; how well projects restore the injured natural resources and services	• Used to evaluate timing, access, feasibility, and other practical aspects of the restoration

Project Ideas will be evaluated using three sets of Restoration Planning Criteria:

These three sets of criteria are described in the Programmatic RP/EA (see https://www.cerc.usgs.gov/orda_docs/DocHandler.ashx?task=get&ID=2976), and are also provided below. Based on the outcome of this evaluation process, the TCTC will identify restoration ideas that best meet the criteria and will propose these restoration ideas (alternatives) in a draft RP, which will be available for public review and comment. After the public review period, the Trustees will incorporate comments received and finalize the selection of the restoration project ideas/alternatives.

The Trustees' intent is to identify and ultimately select a suite of restoration project ideas in a coordinated manner, such that the sum of the restoration benefits across projects is greater than the sum of the individual restoration actions. In other words, a balanced portfolio of projects may achieve overarching, broader benefits for the NOMNRDAR Site than individual projects in isolation.

Criteria for Restoration Planning:

Acceptability Criteria	
Criteria	**Interpretation**
Addresses injured natural resource and services	Project must restore, rehabilitate, replace, and/or acquire the equivalent of injured natural resources or lost services that have been targeted for restoration within the Programmatic RP/EA (e.g., project addresses tribal cultural services losses from injured natural resources, restores habitat for federally protected migratory species, and restores state-regulated upland game species) (also see Section 2.4 in the Programmatic RP/EA). In addition, projects should address/incorporate restoration of targeted natural resources and services identified in the corresponding Invitation to Submit Restoration Project Ideas (also referred to as a "Restoration Project Packages Period" in the Programmatic RP/EA), as documented by Trustee mandates, priorities, and resolutions.
Compliance with applicable/relevant laws, policies, and regulations	Project must be legal and adhere to federal, state, and tribal laws, policies, and regulations.
Technically feasible	Technology and management skills necessary to implement (a restoration project) are well-known and each element (of the project) has a reasonable chance of successful completion in an acceptable period of time [43 C.F.R. § 11.14(qq)].
Cost-effective	When two or more activities provide the same or similar level of benefits, the least-costly activity providing that level of benefits will be selected [43 C.F.R. § 11.14(j)].
Cost benefit	Relationship of the expected costs of the proposed actions to the expected benefits from the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, and/or acquisition of equivalent resources [43 C.F.R. § 11.82(d)(2)].

Natural Resource and Services Criteria	
Criteria	**Interpretation**
Injured resources and services restored by project	Evaluation will be based on the specific natural resource or service that benefits from the project. Projects must benefit the injured natural resource(s) or service(s) identified in the corresponding Restoration Project Packages Period in the Programmatic RP/EA. Projects that benefit more than one injured natural resource or service are preferred. In addition, projects that avoid or minimize additional natural resource injury or environmental degradation will be given priority.
Proximity of project to injured resources and service	Project location must be identified for Trustee consideration. Both on-site and off-site projects will be considered (see Section 3.3.1 in the Programmatic RP/EA). For off-site projects, all else being equal, restoration in closer geographic proximity to the NOMNRDAR Site is preferred.
Benefits to resources and services	Project will be evaluated in terms of whether expected benefits can be quantified and the success of the project determined. Projects can be scaled to provide restoration of appropriate magnitude. Small projects that provide only minimal benefits relative to injured resources or larger projects that cannot be appropriately scaled to meet the goals of the RP are less favorable.
Equity and environmental justice	Restoration projects/ideas that benefit low-income and ethnic populations (including Native Americans) in proportion to the impacts to these populations are preferred. Restoration should not have disproportionately high costs or low benefits to low-income or ethnic populations. Further, where there are specific service losses to these populations, such as impacts on subsistence fishing, hunting, and gathering, restoration should target benefits to these populations.
Cost-effective and established technologies	Projects with a high ratio of expected benefits to costs are preferred. This includes using established technologies that have a high success rate. Projects with experimental or unproven technologies are not preferred.
Monitoring plans	For most projects (e.g., planting of native prairie, removal of invasive vegetation), the Trustees expect the project plans will include a monitoring plan that covers the timeframe needed for restored resources and habitats to gain full functionality, which is generally anticipated to be no less than five years. Monitoring plans establish monitoring and reporting provisions to ensure the specific restoration actions are conducted as intended, and are effectively restoring injured resources and services. Such provisions include monitoring techniques, performance standards and criteria, guidelines for implementing corrective actions, and a schedule for frequency and duration of monitoring.
Adverse impacts from project	Identify the adverse impacts, short- and/or long-term, from the project. Some short-term adverse impacts from implementation are expected; however, projects with large or long-term adverse impacts are not preferred.

Implementation Criteria	
Criteria	**Interpretation**
Timing of restoration completion	Identify if the project will take longer than five years to implement, and, if so, identify the completion timeframe. Projects that provide restoration benefits earlier are preferred.
Land manager (if applicable)	Projects will be evaluated based on the availability and costs of a long-term land manager (e.g., federal, state, or Tribal government) involved in managing the project.
Accessibility	Projects will be evaluated based on accessibility. Depending on the type of project and the resources and services being restored, open access may or may not be required or preferred (e.g., restrictions during bird nesting season).
Matching funds	Projects with matching funds will be given preference during evaluation. If matching funds are available, identify the source of funding and if there is a matching ratio (e.g., 1:1) or other restrictions.
Provides benefits not provided by other projects/programs	Preference will be given to projects not already being implemented, have no planned funding, or are insufficiently funded by other programs. Preference is given to projects that would not be implemented without NRDAR restoration funds.
Implementation proficiency of restoration projects	Projects that use techniques that have been demonstrated proficient elsewhere are preferred.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is NRDAR?

When hazardous substances such as lead, zinc, cadmium, and other metals are released into the environment and harm the public's natural resources, federal, state, and tribal representatives are authorized under CERCLA and associated regulations [42 U.S.C. §§ 9601 *et seq.*; 43 C.F.R. Part 11] to act on behalf of the public as trustees of natural resources. The process through which these trustees act in order to restore the injured natural resources is called a natural resource damage assessment and restoration or NRDAR.

The purpose of the NRDAR is to (1) assess and quantify injuries sustained to natural resources and related services by the release of a hazardous substance; (2) recover damages (i.e., monetary compensation for injuries) from the responsible parties; and (3) use recovered damages ("restoration funds") to restore, rehabilitate, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the affected natural resources and related services [43 C.F.R. Part 11].

What is the Tar Creek Trustee Council?

The Tar Creek Trustee Council includes representatives from the U.S. Department of the Interior, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Cherokee Nation, the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, the Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma, the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, the Seneca-Cayuga Nation, the Wyandotte Nation, and the Oklahoma Secretary of Energy and Environment (collectively, the "Tar Creek Trustee Council," the "TCTC," or "the Trustees").

The Trustees created the TCTC to ensure cooperation and coordination among the Trustees in assessing and pursuing claims for natural resource damages and restoring, rehabilitating, replacing, or acquiring the equivalent of the natural resources or resource services that were injured or lost.

Why restoration now?

The injury assessment at the NOMNRDAR Site is ongoing and, as such, the Trustees have not yet completed the quantification of injury and service loss. However, the Trustees have decided to initiate restoration now for two main reasons: (1) the Trustees believe that the injury studies completed to date have sufficiently demonstrated the types of injury and service loss that have occurred such that appropriate types of restoration actions may be identified in order to compensate for the losses that have occurred, and (2) the Trustees have recovered partial damages for the NOMNRDAR Site from some of the potentially responsible parties (Asarco LLC and Peabody Energy Corporation) through bankruptcy settlements. In addition, remedial activities are still ongoing at the Site. The Trustees believe it is nevertheless possible to proceed with restoration, if planned and implemented in careful coordination with the ongoing remedial cleanup.

The goal of the NRDAR process is to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of injured natural resources and associated lost services as a result of exposure to hazardous substances. The intent of restoration is to compensate the public for harm to natural resources and lost uses, and the sooner restoration can begin, the sooner those benefits will be realized. The Trustees are therefore initiating this first invitation to submit r restoration project ideas, focusing on the resources and services for which the injury studies conducted to date have determined that contaminant levels were sufficient to cause harm. This includes terrestrial habitats (e.g., upland, floodplain, and riparian corridors) and supported biota such as migratory birds; aquatic habitat (e.g., Lytle, Elm, and Tar creeks and tributaries; Neosho and Spring rivers and tributaries; Grand Lake); and fish and mussels, and cultural (Tribal) services.

What is the relationship between response actions and natural resource damage assessment and restoration actions?

In 1983, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added the Tar Creek Superfund Site to the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is the list of hazardous waste sites in the United States eligible for long-term remedial action (clean-up) financed under the federal Superfund program. Generally, response actions address risks to human health and the environment from contamination, while the focus of NRDAR actions is to return natural resources and the services they provide to their baseline condition (i.e., the level of services that would have existed but for the release), and to compensate for "interim" losses or the effects of contamination over space and time. The Trustees will continue to coordinate their restoration activities with remedial actions, including consulting with EPA on any proposed project idea that would occur on the Tar Creek Superfund Site to ensure consistency with the remedy and remedial activities. Information on Superfund response activities at the Tar Creek Superfund Site can be found at www.epa.gov/superfund/tar-creek. For additional information about the Superfund cleanup, contact the EPA Remedial Project Manager, Katrina Coltrain, at (214) 665-8143; or the EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, Janetta Coats, at (214) 665-7308.

What is the difference between the Tri State Mining District, the NOMNRDAR Site, and the Tar Creek Superfund Site?

The TSMD is a large area covering more than 2,500 square miles across portions of southeast Kansas, southwest Missouri, and northeast Oklahoma. The TSMD was the site of commercial lead and zinc mining that began around 1848 and continued until the 1970s. Significant portions of the TSMD were and continue to be affected by releases of hazardous substances related to mining operations. The expansive area of the TSMD includes portions of the Spring River and Neosho River watersheds. These watersheds include several streams that flow through mine-impacted areas in Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. The Spring and Neosho rivers converge at Grand Lake O' the Cherokees (Grand Lake).

Because the area is large and spans multiple jurisdictions and states, the TSMD has been divided into multiple NRDAR sites. The NOMNRDAR Site is located within the northeastern Oklahoma section of the TSMD. It includes all areas in northeastern Oklahoma, terrestrial and aquatic, where hazardous substances released from the TSMD have come to be located, or where natural resources or the services they provide may have been affected by the releases of these hazardous substances. The NOMNRDAR Site has an Aquatic Site component, a Terrestrial Site component, and a Tribal Lost Use Site component. The Terrestrial Site component is comprised of contaminated upland habitats in and around the chat piles in Ottawa County, as well as contaminated riparian and floodplain habitat adjacent to the streams and creeks. The Aquatic Site component includes Lytle, Elm, and Tar creeks; the Neosho and Spring rivers; Grand Lake; and tributaries. Finally, the Tribal Lost Use Site component to the NOMNRDAR Site includes Tribal services provided by natural resources. The Tar Creek Superfund Site, one of four Superfund sites located within the TSMD, falls within the NOMNRDAR Site boundary.

What categories of restoration will be considered in "on-site" and "off-site" areas during this invitation to submit restoration project ideas?

As described in the Programmatic RP/EA, the preferred restoration alternative for the NOMNRDAR Site includes a combination of "on-site" and "off-site" restoration.

On-site restoration is restoration within the NOMNRDAR Site boundary, including both terrestrial and aquatic areas where contamination has come to be located or where natural resources or the services they provide may have been affected by releases of these hazardous substances. The Trustees intend to plan and implement restoration in coordination with ongoing remedial actions. For this invitation to submit restoration project ideas, the Trustees will consider on-site restoration project ideas in areas where EPA-led cleanup actions have been completed and where future cleanup actions will not be expected to have a negative impact on the restoration. Although cleanup actions are ongoing within the NOMNRDAR Site, cleanup has been completed or is near completion in certain on-site terrestrial areas. In such terrestrial on-site areas, restoration could be conducted immediately, and will be considered in this invitation to submit restoration project ideas. On the other hand, clean-up actions for on-site aquatic habitats have not yet begun. EPA anticipates releasing a Record of Decision determining the aquatic cleanup actions in 2021 (see the Tar Creek Superfund Site Strategic Plan Cleanup Progress & Plans for the Future at https://semspub.epa.gov/work/06/100013790.pdf). Accordingly, the Trustees anticipate that implementation of on-site aquatic restoration project ideas may not be feasible for many years to come, after cleanup is complete. Thus, on-site aquatic restoration project ideas are unlikely to be selected at this time.

Off-site restoration is restoration that occurs outside of the NOMNRDAR Site boundary and could include areas in northeastern Oklahoma and areas within adjacent states that will restore, replace, rehabilitate, and/or acquire the equivalent of injured resources and services. Most projects will be in areas of Craig, Ottawa, Mayes, and

Delaware counties in northeastern Oklahoma. Appropriate off-site projects could occur in other counties in Oklahoma or portions of adjoining states that are in or near the TSMD, but restoration at those sites must provide unique or competitive opportunities to replace and/or rehabilitate resources or services that have been impacted at the NOMNRDAR Site. The Trustees have discretion on the focus of requests (or invitations) for restoration project ideas, and the Trustees will consider off-site project ideas that are located within northeastern Oklahoma during this invitation to submit restoration ideas.

In summary, for this invitation to submit restoration project ideas, the Trustees will consider (1) on-site terrestrial, (2) off-site terrestrial and aquatic, and (3) cultural restoration project ideas. **Due to the need to coordinate restoration implementation with remedial actions, which have not yet been initiated in on-site aquatic areas, the Trustees are not seeking on-site aquatic project ideas at this time.**

How will you protect proprietary information associated with restoration project ideas that are submitted for consideration?

The Trustees do not protect any information contained in project ideas submitted for consideration. Any project suggestions and associated attachments may be posted online. The information you submit will be retained as part of the Administrative Record for Restoration. Your project suggestion including your name, if included, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold this information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

What are the next steps after the Trustee Council has evaluated received project ideas?

Once the TCTC has reviewed restoration project ideas and identified a suite of projects that meet the objective and goals, the TCTC will prepare a Draft RP/EA(s) (as appropriate), which will propose preferred alternatives for restoration. Pursuant to CERCLA and the National Environmental Policy Act, the Draft RP/EA(s) will be made available to the public for a minimum of 30 days for review and comment. The Trustees will consider any public comments they receive, make any modifications to the RP/EA(s) as may be necessary, and include a Response to Comments in the Final RP/EA(s). The Trustees will publish a Final RP/EA(s), which will select the restoration projects that will be implemented using recovered funds.

Please be advised that nothing in this Invitation to Submit Restoration Project Ideas or the Programmatic RP/EA creates any obligation upon the TCTC or its individual Trustees or representatives to select a particular project idea, or to contact or coordinate with any entity, including any entity that submits a restoration project idea.